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# USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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## NUTRITION

New Protein Foods. A new weapon is appearing in the front lines of the war on hunger. Special commercially produced high protein foods are making it possible to provide greater nutrition for the hungry peoples of the world, according to U. S. Department of Agriculture specialists. These foods are being manufactured in the form of tasty beverages, meat-like products, soups and candies. A soy drink that outsells conventional soft drinks is popular now in Hong Kong. A high protein beverage that has the added advantage of being inexpensive will soon be marketed in El Salvador. Brazil is being studied as a possible outlet for a recently developed vegetable protein food product. More than 15 U. S. private companies have expressed interest in producing high protein foods in diet-deficient countries, thanks in part to USDA/AID encouragement.

## RESEARCH

To Preserve Food. Much progress has been made in research on the preservation of food by irradiation, but certain problems need to be solved before such products are generally available to consumers, the U. S. Department of Agriculture reports. Used on meat, the process may generate "off" flavors; fruits and vegetables suffer more from loss of flavor. The Food and Drug Administration has not yet approved the irradiation of foods, except for a few items such as canned bacon. They have approved it for disinfecting wheat flour and inhibiting sprouts on potatoes. Use of irradiated canned bacon is, at present, limited to the armed forces. The irradiation processes used are high speed electrons, gamma rays, and x-rays. Tests show irradiated foods are safe to use and nutritionally adequate.

Snack Habits. Snacks are becoming more popular. This may be related to the increased proportion of teenagers in the population, to the popularity of television, and to an increase in entertaining at home. During the ten year survey made by the Department of Agriculture (1955-1965) consumption increased for soft drinks, punches and ades, potato chips, crackers, cookies, doughnuts, ice cream, candy, lunch meats and peanut butter.



#### FOR HOME USE

Safer Arsenic Products. To lessen the risk of pesticide accidents around the home, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has moved to decrease the amount of arsenic allowed in home-use products. The Department proposed to no longer register products for use around the home containing more than 2 percent sodium arsenite and 1.5 percent arsenic trioxide. Mostly affected are certain weed killers, including some used for crab grass control and for soil sterilization. Department officials say these arsenic pesticides have contributed to numerous accidents involving children and domestic animals. Federal law requires that all pesticides must be registered with the Department of Agriculture before they can be marketed in interstate commerce.

#### THE AIR WE BREATHE...THE WATER WE DRINK

Pollution Problems. Man is his own worst enemy! The biggest polluter, of course, is man himself...notes the U. S. Department of Agriculture. His car, his crowded cities and his large factories disperse quantities of unwanted chemical and physical by-products into the air, water and soil. Nearly all direct uses of water changes its characteristics to some degree. And once changed, most of the water goes back into its previous flow. The Mississippi River is re-used at least 16 times between St. Louis and New Orleans.

#### NEW PRODUCTS

Dehydrated Foods. Use of dehydrated food is on the upswing according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. About 1500 new food products will appear on grocers' shelves across the country this year. Among the new products will be fruits and fruit products--even applesauce--in the dehydrated form. Tomatoes, green beans, peas and asparagus, as well as dairy products of cottage cheese, sour cream and processed cheese and "dips" will be on the market as dehydrated foods. Meats of improved quality and flavor will be available as new drying techniques emerge. Salmon from Alaska, lobster tails from South Africa; papaya powder from Hawaii and banana powder from Ecuador could be among the delicacies of the near future.

#### FILLED MILK

What is It? "Filled milk" is a product which may contain fresh skim milk or skim milk reconstituted from nonfat dry milk, with added vegetable fat--sometimes coconut oil--in place of natural butterfat, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Lately filled milk has been appearing at markets in different parts of the country.



## NATIONAL RESEARCH

Need for Iron? The Human Nutrition and Consumer Use Research Committee of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has recommended a series of studies on the eating patterns of groups by sex, age and activity. Emphasis on the iron intake of girls in the 10-22 age bracket will determine whether there is a need for iron fortification in the diet. The committee recommended that studies be made on:

- Expanded research to meet food needs in the National School Lunch Program.
- Increased basic research on the significance of intake of fats from different food sources and how they are affected by other dietary components.
- Initiation of work designed to measure the monetary value of family members' services. Information is especially needed on the value of homemaker's services in a variety of situations; such information could affect decisions of homemakers to work outside the home.
- Increased research to determine the extent viruses survive dry cleaning and laundering and are transferred from one fabric to another during the cleaning process.
- A pilot study to determine to what extent contamination of clothing by pesticides constitutes a problem.

## OUTBREAK OF VIRUS

Attention Travelers. One of the animal diseases that must be kept out of the United States is foot-and-mouth disease which attacks cattle and other cloven-hoofed animals. Caused by an infinitesimal virus that can live for months in a speck of dirt, FMD is prevalent in a number of countries and has recently become a national disaster in Great Britain. More than 320,000 animals infected or exposed to the disease in that country have been slaughtered to date. The cost is incalculable and, of course, consumers share it. Twelve U. S. Department of Agriculture veterinarians are assisting the British in their efforts to bring the disease under control. The Department strongly urges travelers to observe agricultural import restrictions.

## CHECK WOOD DECAY

Safeguard Your House. In midwinter examine attics--especially insulated attics--lacking proper ventilation, warns a U. S. Department of Agriculture booklet on wood decay in houses. Check for condensation moisture or frost accumulation and decay. Note especially the eaves level at the north side of the house. Persistence of condensation into the period of warm weather can permit decay. Attic condensation difficulties can be corrected easily by increased ventilation, and most damage can be avoided. Read about preventing and controlling wood decay in Home and Garden Bulletin #73, "Wood Decay in Houses," write U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Price--15 cents. Please include your zip code.

## LET YOUR FREEZER DO THE WORK

Tips for Homefreezing. Do not overcook foods that are to be frozen, suggests the Department of Agriculture. Foods to be heated before serving are best if only partially cooked. Use as little fat as possible in gravies and sauces. Fats have a tendency to separate. Fried foods may become rancid after 1-2 months of storage. Pepper gets stronger during storage, so use seasonings sparingly. Remember, the nutritive value of properly frozen food is nearly equal to that of fresh food. A storage table for high quality home-frozen meats and poultry at 0° F:

Beef	6-12 months	Sausage and	
Lamb and veal	6-9 months	ground meat	1-3 months
Pork, fresh	3-8 months	Chickens	12 months
		Turkeys	6 months

## PICK THE PLENTIFULS

February Buys. Broiler-fryers, potatoes, dairy products and dry split peas.

## NEW FILM AVAILABLE

How to Be a Better Shopper. "Janet and the Genie," a half hour, color motion picture features Janet, a high school girl, touring the world of consumer marketing with the Genie of the market place. She learns about consumer grading and inspection and how to be a better shopper. For loan or purchase information write to the Motion Picture Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Prints are available for loan from land-grant university film libraries and other universities cooperating with USDA.

## PUBLICATIONS

It's a Young World. Two-fifths of the population of the United States is not yet of voting age, according to the new handbook, "Age of Transition" published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Young people in their most productive years are most likely to migrate...from the country to the city. Rural youth of America are featured in the book which gives a composite picture of the opportunities available to all young people. Covering many important phases of a changing society; education, health, welfare, and future promise, the book may serve as a guide to state, county and community groups. The "Age of Transition: Rural Youth in a Changing Society," Agricultural Handbook #347, is available for \$.75 from the Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 20402. Please include your zip code.

Farming in Alaska? According to the U. S. Department of Agriculture some land in Alaska may still be homesteaded. Certain areas in Alaska are suitable for farming, but the land may have to be cleared. Chances for success are limited by lack of markets and transportation facilities. Alaska exports few farm products. The main demand for these products is local, and comes from the military or local communities. A revised leaflet #432 on "Where and How to Get A Farm" is available from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Post card requests accepted, please include your zip code.

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